

**ABSTRACT**

**[0063]** A vehicle tailgate extension apparatus and method of using the same. The tailgate extension apparatus generally comprises a U-frame member, a plurality of hinge elements, and a plurality of side braces. The U-frame member may be locked into a plurality of operative positions optionally including a backstop position, an extension position, and a step position. The extension apparatus is stored within the interior of the tailgate until needed, and the extension may be pulled out of the tailgate via a plurality of storage channels. The side braces directly connect the U-frame member to the vehicle tailgate and may be stored within the arms of the U-frame when the extension apparatus is stowed in the tailgate.